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ber. These charts show the total precipitation and the departures of the mean temperatures from the normal for each district; the total precipitation, the percentage of clear sky between sunrise and sunset, and the sea level isobars, isotherms and prevailing winds for the United States as a whole; and the tracks of anticyclones and cyclones, for August.

EDITORIAL NOTES AND COMMENT

A well-known arctic explorer has written to the Society to ask why two different latitudes are given in some of the best atlases for the highest north attained by Nansen. The fact is that more than two different statements as to his highest north have appeared in authoritative publications.

On April 7, 1895, Nansen's observations showed that he had much surpassed the highest previous record but, in his book, he makes no more account of this achievement than of any other position along his route. The fine map made by Bartholomew for the English edition of the book does not even give the latitude figures of his highest north. The explorer wrote in "Farthest North" that he had reached "about $86^{\circ}10' N.$;" and the English edition of his book adds, in a footnote, that on further calculation, his northmost point was $86^{\circ}13.6'$.

Later still, Vol. 2 of Nansen's "Scientific Results" gave $86^{\circ}12.8'$ as his highest point of observation and added that he walked about a mile further north. Stieler's Hand-Atlas takes this walk into account and gives Nansen $86^{\circ}14' N.$; Andrée's Hand-Atlas gives $86^{\circ}4'$, perhaps a misprint; and the last edition of Greely's "Hand-book" gives $86^{\circ}12'$.

Large scale maps showing the distribution of edible shellfish along the coasts of France have been in course of publication, for four years, in the *Bulletin* de l'Institut océanographique de Monaco. The laborious researches they record have been a work of love by two enthusiastic men of science, Prof. Joubin and Mr. Guérin, who hope, in two years more, to complete the mapping of the beds of shellfish on all the French coasts.

They were so fortunate as to secure the interest of a princely

patron who has spared no expense to produce these colored maps in the best cartographic style. The maps were possible because the Prince of Monaco paid the bills. He has thus given one more proof, amid his oceanographic researches, of his helpfulness in the development of maritime industries.

Albert I, Prince of Monaco, is widely known as an indefatigable student of the sea. His personality, however, has been best revealed in the book he published in 1905, "*La Carrière d'un Navigateur*" in which we see the man, as well as the scientist; for we get from it more than a mere inkling of the temperament and aspirations that have shaped his career. As the *Bulletin* said of the book, "it tells us of his views on many things, of his philosophic notions, and of his conviction that life is too serious to be spent in frivolity, a thought that was the basis of his determination to be a sailor and an oceanographer."

Nothing more impressively illustrates our advancing knowledge of the various conditions of the oceans than the twelve colored maps (*Annal. d. Hydrog. u. Maritim. Met.*, Vol. 38, No. 1, 1910), showing what we now know of the temperature of the Pacific waters at the surface and at ten different depths, down to 4,000 meters. The scientific expeditions of the leading nations have, for many years, been collecting the observational material that is now so well expressed on many maps and charts. Not a few school wall maps are beginning to illustrate these facts so adequately that they are a great help to teachers in their class room talks on the oceans, their islands and their relation to the lands.

The various tints for depths show clearly that all the oceanic islands of the Pacific, for example, rise not from the deeps but are the culminating points of submarine ridges, whose shape and extent are indicated on the maps, as far as our present knowledge goes; that the great complex of islands to the northeast and north of Australia stand on a submarine plateau which is connected with the continent and is believed to have once been a part of it; and, farther south, are observed the comparatively shallow waters, between Australia and South America, dotted here and there with islands, the submerged plateau on which they stand, suggesting a possible former land connection between the two continents. The width of the continental shelf along most coasts is now fairly well known and adds a new detail to maps of the oceans; and since the return of the Bruce expedition from Coats Land, the maps have

been able to show that the great submarine ridge, discovered when the first trans-ocean cables were laid, extends through the mid-Atlantic practically from Arctic to Antarctic waters. On the whole, the maps of the seas of the past twenty years, show improvement that is almost commensurate with that of the maps of land areas.

Mr. Herbert A. Dodge of Crystal Lake, Illinois, has presented the Society with a copy of Emil von Sydow's *Schul-Atlas* of 1866. This was eighteen years after the distinguished German geographer prepared the first issue of his small school atlas. It was an epoch-making book for the new ideas it embraced came, in time, to be recognized as the fundamental principles upon which school maps should be based; and from that time to the present, Sydow's *Schul-Atlas* and the Sydow-Wagner *Methodischer Schul-Atlas*, which succeeded it in 1889, thirteen years after Sydow's death, have stood in the forefront of school atlases. No other map product has more clearly and instructively illustrated the story of the steady progress of the cartographic art than the work which Sydow began, under the auspices of Justus Perthes, and which Dr. Hermann Wagner and the Perthes cartographers have so ably carried on.

Sydow introduced the revolutionary idea that school maps should tell children something more of geography than merely its political phases. Maps should picture as well the mountains, valleys and plains. Cartographic expression should be given to the land forms and the map should help the teacher to show what the surface of the earth is really like. Sydow's atlas introduced other innovations, but this was the fundamental idea and it has been steadily developed with the wonderful growth and improvement of map symbolism for the expression of a large variety of facts.

This interesting example of the eighteenth edition is not more than half as large as the atlas of to-day; but the contrast in size is no measure of the vast improvement in map expression, and in the content of geographical knowledge to be expressed, that are now seen in this and many other school atlases whose makers have followed in the path that Sydow blazed.